Report for induction of six ATR-42 aircraft. The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Retiring age of Air India Employees

1234. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether retiring age of Air India employees has been reduced from 60 to 58 years; and

(b) the steps taken including reduction of salaries and perks of employees, especially of pilots, cabin crew and engineers to ensure that the company runs into profit once again?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The salaries & perks of employees have not been reduced as these are determined for specific wage period by Agreement/ Settlements entered into with the concerned Unions/Associations/ Guilds. However, in order to improve the financial position of Air India, following steps have been taken:—

(i) Marketing efforts have been stepped up to generate additional revenue, (ii) Network rationalization and consolidation with emphasis placed on route profitability, (iii) Reduction in expenditure on outside repairs of aircraft by undertaking more in-house repairs, (iv) Several posts of India based officers abroad have been abolished, (v) Freeze on external recruitment in non-operational categories, (vi) Two voluntary schemes have been notified viz. shorter working week scheme and leave without pay/allowances scheme for a period of two years extendable upto five years.

Merger of IA and AI

†1235. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal of merger of Indian Airlines into Air India is under consideration of Government; and

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†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.